



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
**JOSEPH A. CURTATONE**  
**MAYOR**

TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2018, 7:00 PM  
**MINUTES**

MEETING AT SOMERVILLE CITY HALL  
93 HIGHLAND AVENUE  
3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

*Meeting notes prepared by Vanessa Boukili, based on a recording of the meeting*

**Commission Members in attendance:** Rachel Borgatti (Chair), Michael Fager, Mathias Neuber, David Turin, Aladdine Joroff, Cristina Kennedy

**Commission Members absent:** Owen Wartella

**Others in Attendance:** Dan Driscoll (DCR), Bill Zamparelli (Eversource), Eric LaMontagne (Eversource), Tim Montague (Eversource), Gregg McBride (GZA LSP for Eversource), Eline Bakker

**Staff:** Vanessa Boukili (Conservation Agent)

Rachel Borgatti called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm followed by introductions.

**Old Business:**

- 1) DCR presentation on Draw 7 Park - Presentation by Dan Dricoll (DCR) and discussion (7:06 pm)  
Documents Presented: 20180205 Draw Seven 1st Public Meeting.pdf
  - Overview of park goals and design (20180205 Draw Seven 1st Public Meeting.pdf)
    - Music venue idea is no longer a part of the design.
  - Will submit official NOI filing later
  - Core design program includes continued river walk, access to fishing pier, multi-use sports field, passive recreation space, restoration of a natural living shoreline, plaza spaces for social gathering, limited parking, dam access (may not do). Design also incorporates climate resiliency.
  - “Curves” option is the preferred design. Design has been further developed to reduce parking and add a lot of bike racks, and make the promenade more naturalized. Also, DCR property extends farther than originally thought, so the field will be moved farther back and there will be more room for natural areas. Design now incorporates over 60% softscape.



- Living shoreline proposal is at about 25% design. New partnership with Mystic River Watershed Association (MyWRA), which includes additional funding to further develop living shoreline plan. Will need some sort of hard edge revetment. Can do charrette with ConCom.
- Remediation of park is necessary as there is contamination across park. There have been assessments of contamination and found oil (there is a capped oil pipe from embankment of Orange Line to River). Hiring LSP for remediation plans.
- Updated project schedule:
  - 100% construction documents – Late Fall 2018
    - Complicated by Eversource oil spill, as well as water line, sewer line, and energy line going to dam. Proposal to upgrade the utility lines as part of construction. DCR can share detailed plans with ConCom.
  - Plan to submit plans for all phases of project to ConCom at the same time. Likely that utility upgrades will be done in phase 1.
- Discussion:
  - With climate change projections, what is the potential of the turf field being flooded? Will material be washed into river? Will material withstand inundation or will it be damaged?
    - The field is expected to flood with storm surge.
    - Field will be made of new material (same as what is used on Daly Field on Charles River). It's all organic and doesn't have any toxins, but it is very expensive.
    - Flooding may damage material.
    - Natural grass would not work on this site.
  - Are there any stormwater system drains that will backup and flood under climate predictions?
    - Yes. Projections show that water will overtop the dam. There is a tidegate on the new 72" outfall pipe.
  - Plan to push plants into armored shoreline rip-rap?
    - Yes. Will bioengineer so that there is armoring in sub-base, but all that is visible is natural materials.
    - Designing as much as possible for flooding.
  - Potential to value engineer out the natural aspects of the project after the designs are complete?
    - No. The natural aspects are the least expensive. Even if there are budgetary constraints, it would not be useful to remove the natural aspects.
  - There is another public meeting coming up. Could be useful to speak up in favor of natural design aspects.
  - Would a comment letter from the ConCom be useful?
    - Could be useful to comment on the limited value of fields along water bodies.
    - **Action item:** add discussion of letter to DCR to next meeting's agenda.
  - What is the current phase of the design?
    - About 25%.
  - Lighting plans?
    - Field will have light. Pedestrian bridge proposed by Encore Resort will have lighting as well.
    - There is coordination between pedestrian bridge and Draw 7 Park design teams.
  - Funding for Draw 7 park

- Complete funding to finish design and get to bid set. Will need 4-5 million for construction.
- Do have 500k from FRIT for mitigation. These funds could be used for construction of the bike path through the bus yard.
- For resiliency planning at dam, is there a consideration to add a fourth pump?
  - The 3<sup>rd</sup> pump has only been used a few times.
  - Discussion ongoing to add an emergency backup pump.

### **New Business:**

- 2) Eversource Oil Spill - presentation by Eric LaMontagne, Tim Montague, Bill Zamparelli, and Gregg McBride and discussion (7:50 pm)

Documents Presented: timeline of events, google earth locus map, site plan, and figure showing approximate extent of PTCO in sewer (Eversource Oil Spill Handouts 2018-05-22 ConCom meeting.pdf)

- Spill was discovered by MassDEP based on multiple complaints, especially at the Wynn living shoreline. April 12<sup>th</sup> sheen on Mystic River was reported to be consistent with Eversource's pipe type cable oil (PTCO; DF100). Sheens were discovered further down stream a few weeks prior (Mystic Station, Admiral Hill, etc.) and MassDEP and Coast Guard were investigating.
- Eversource sampled sheen same day (April 12<sup>th</sup>). Fingerprint analysis matched Eversource PTCO.
- Did not contact ConCom right away because they were searching for source of the leak. At first suspected leak was submarine. Contacted ConCom on April 26<sup>th</sup> when believed major work would need to be done in the Mystic River to find the exact pipe that was leaking and repair it. On 27<sup>th</sup> discovered leak was on the land side, and not associated immediately with riverfront.
- At this point extensively on the water putting out booms and controls. Noticed heavier sheens accumulating near dam.
- Found that leak source was from PTC 385 pipe near Lombardi way. Oil entered stormwater system and traveled to MWRA CSO system and discharged from MWRA 205 outfall.
- Approximately 7000 gallons of pipe type cable oil leaked (rate of 0 to 200 gallons per day, depending on pressure in pipe). Recovery to date is about 2000 gallons, through recover sumps installed near storm drain at release site and pumps on storm drain (being pumped 24 hours).
- Significant controls have been placed in the river. Since the controls were put in place April 28<sup>th</sup> no breakthroughs have been seen past the multiple course of boom.
- Significant recovery at site. Clean Harbors is on site collecting prior to and during low tide, skimming with vacuum trucks and using manual methods (pool skimmers and absorbents). Decrease in recovery amount every day for last two weeks.
- PTCO is highly refined oil product, extremely hydrophobic. Stays at top of water body. Spreads out into thin sheens and is hard to recover.
- Found leak through the use of a perfluorocarbon tracer. Could not use tracer until ruled out submarine leak.
- How monitor system to prevent this in the future?
  - Computer monitored pressure plants and pump plants. Didn't work as intended in this case because at the same time the sister line had nitrogen in it, so they were bleeding line etc. They were observing fluctuations, but could not tell which line they originated from.
  - Most of line is encased in concrete, so checking the line by hand is not possible. Have to rely on computer system.
  - Do inspect manholes along the line regularly.

- Verbal IRA has been discussed; formal IRA plan will need to be filed 60 days after notification. To date MassDEP has approved collecting sheens, finding leak, and recovering oil. That is all that has been done so far. Now that there is no ongoing leak of PTCO can begin recovery and eventually clean the pipes and figure out full clean-up plan.
- Leak has been permanently repaired, but there is still oil in the ground. Oil is traveling from release site through joints in stormdrain system and into the river. Joints have been now been sealed so that no new oil should be entering system.
- Eversource to copy ConCom on all 21E filings.
- Request for Emergency Certification. End date 60 days from notification is June 15, 2018. ConCom site visits April 29 and May 15, 2018.
- How often do these leaks occur?
  - Depends on system. Have had one each in past two years. Prior to that generally 1.5-2 years. Eversource does not want leaks, and does everything they possibly can to prevent leaks from occurring. Generally when they occur it is because of a dig-in.
  - In this case there are indications that there was physical damage to line, which caused corruptions and pitting.
- How clean up PTC fluid in storm drain and sediment?
  - Maintaining boom in length of drainage. Have pumped drain multiple times. Have stopped oil from entering system, plan to go through and jet whole line and recover fluid as work through system. Also recovering oil from excavation site at a significant rate.
  - There is contamination adjacent to outfall. Will do limited excavation, could flush rip-rap with water. Need to characterize extent of contamination with samples. Will formulate plan after testing. Will be in touch with DCR. Will present formal plan to ConCom.
    - Formal land-side mitigation plans will need additional approval from ConCom.
  - Committed to do whatever it takes to fully clean up the site. They are also working with DCR and Wynn Development for cleanups of the Dam and Wynn site.
- Fate of oil in environment?
  - Polymer-based polybutene. Very highly refined, extremely low toxicity oil. Once it depolymerizes (time, sunlight) it degrades quickly.
- Remediation is being led by MassDEP. Daily contact with DEP and Coast Guard. DEP has approved plan verbally (will forward RTN number).
- Emergency Certification conditions: (1) copy ConCom on Ch 21E filings, (2) applicant to return to commission after the emergency has been abated to report on work that was performed and to consider appropriate mitigation measures.

### Updates and Discussion (8:45 pm)

- 1) Ongoing Projects - *Tabled until next meeting*
- 2) Community Gardens review - *Tabled until next meeting*
- 3) Outstanding Action Items:
  - Commissioner Wartella to look for general audience brochure examples and to start working on one for Somerville.
    - *Tabled until next meeting*
  - Commissioner Kennedy to reach out to Somerville Garden Club re: open garden day.
    - SGC is not having any events this summer, but can help get word out about event. Will reach out to Tara to reach out to garden coordinators.
  - Create open list of suggestions for Community Gardens re: getting waitlist people involved.

- *Tabled until next meeting*
  - Ensure Algonquin J-1 System project team fills the on-site depression during restoration.
    - *Continued until next meeting*
  - Ensure Mystic Dock Removal project team restores the site (straw has been washed away).
    - Can wait until after Eversource clean-up.
  - Acquire before and after pictures of Gentle Giant fence installation from Parks and Rec Department.
    - *Tabled until next meeting*
  - Educate Mayor's office and other city departments about the Conservation Commission.
    - *Tabled until next meeting*
  - Talk to DCR about including a check box for Conservation Commission permits on their permit forms.
    - *Tabled until next meeting*
  - Send letter to Carli Fence about Conservation Commission jurisdiction.
    - *Tabled until next meeting*
  - Send NOI and RDA forms to Parks and Rec Department.
    - DONE
  - Commissioner Borgatti to send letter re: ConCom concerns about high speed boats and wakes.
    - *Tabled until next meeting*
- 4) Conway Field and Playground
- Field is closed. PCBs were found on field, have done testing twice. DEP and EPA are reviewing test results and coming up with additional sampling strategy. Website has most up to date information.

**Other Business:**

- 1) Schedule Assembly Square walk through
  - Doodle poll has been sent out.

**Approval of minutes:**

- 1) March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - *tabled*
- 2) Unanimously approved April 24, 2018 minutes with one amendment at 9:01 pm [motion – Turin, second – Kennedy, vote: 6:0:0].

**Vote(s):**

- 1) Vote: to approve Emergency Certification form to Eversource regarding the Mystic River oil spill clean-up [motion – Neuber, second- Kennedy, vote: 6:0:0 @ 9:04 pm].

**Adjourn:**

- 1) Motion to adjourn meeting unanimously approved at 9:07 pm [motion – Neuber, second – Fager].

**Outstanding Action Items:**

**April:**

- **Action:** Talk to DCR about including a check box for Conservation Commission permits on their permit forms (ex. is this project within 25 feet of a wetland? If so, contact local Conservation Commission).
- **Action:** Send letter to Carli Fence about Conservation Commission jurisdiction.
- **Action:** Send NOI and RDA forms to Parks and Rec Department.
- **Action:** Acquire before and after pictures of Gentle Giant fence installation from Parks and Rec Department.

- **Action:** Send email to DPW, Planning, Engineering, Capital Projects, and any other departments who might review construction or development projects. Remind them of Conservation Commission jurisdiction and requirements that must be following when working near the river.
- **Action:** Talk to Garden Coordinators about accounting of garden fees.
- **Action:** Commission to start a list of suggestions for Garden Coordinators about how to be more open/ inclusive, especially to folks on the waitlist (ex. “garden-sitting” when gardeners are on vacation).
- **Action:** Ensure Algonquin J-1 System project team fills the on-site depression during restoration.
- **Action:** Check the curbing at the entrance [Algonquin project], and ask team to restore if necessary.
- **Action:** Ensure Mystic Dock Removal project team restores the site.
- **Action:** Commissioner Joroff to revise ConCom Policies document, then Commissioners to read though it again to make sure everyone is willing to follow it.
- **Action:** Commissioner Joroff to revise public education document.
- **Action:** Commissioner Borgatti to send letter re: ConCom concerns about high speed boats and wakes and ask about routes.

**January:**

- **Action:** Reach out to Sewer Department to check on maintenance schedule of Vortech Units at ASQ.

**November:**

- **Action:** Commissioner Wartella to look for general audience brochure examples and to start working on one for Somerville.

**List of Meeting Documents** (located here: K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2018\2018\_05\_22\_Meeting\_Documents):

- Agenda (2017\_05\_22\_Agenda)
- Ongoing Project Data Spreadsheet (Ongoing Project Data.xlsx)
- April meeting minutes (2017\_04\_24\_Minutes\_DRAFT.doc)
- DCR Draw 7 Park Community Meeting presentation (20180205 Draw Seven 1st Public Meeting.pdf)
- Eversource oil spill handouts (Eversource Oil Spill Handouts 2018-05-22 ConCom meeting.pdf)
- Emergency Certification Form for Eversource oil spill clean-up (Eversource Mystic River WPA Emergency Certification-Somerville-FINAL.pdf)
- Photos of oil sheens and cleanup efforts on Mystic River @ Draw 7 Park: K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2018\2018\_05\_22\_Meeting\_Documents\2018-4-30 Eversource oil leak\Site Photos
- Draft Conservation Commission public education brochure (Somerville Conservation Commission-brochure-DRAFT.docx)